

The Brooklyn Paper

Including The Brooklyn Heights Paper, Carroll Gardens-Cobble Hill Paper, DUMBO Paper, Fort Greene-Clinton Hill Paper and Downtown News

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SKY-HIGH LANDMARK DISTRICT

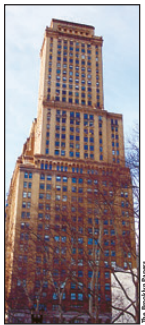
Heights civics seek to protect buildings near Borough Hall

By Jess Wisloski
The Brooklyn Papers

With the help of a preservation group, the Brooklyn Heights Association is promoting a plan to preserve several high-rise office buildings just outside the Brooklyn Heights Historic District.

Calling it the "Borough Hall Skyscraper Historic District," BHA President Nancy Bove touted the proposal at her group's annual meeting last month.

The compact district would "butt up against" the Brooklyn Heights Historic District, according to the proposal's coordinator, BHA governor Alex Herrera, who also works for the New York Landmarks Conservancy. Its boundaries would be Pierrepont, Livingston, Clinton and Court streets. The purpose of the effort, he said, is to preserve some of the existing high-rises for fear they could be torn down to make way for taller



A view of 16 Court St., part of proposed landmark area.

buildings or larger complexes under the Downtown Brooklyn Rezoning Plan approved last summer.

"These are very distinguished commercial buildings built by the best architects of the day," said Herrera, technical services director of the Landmarks Conservancy. Herrera said the movement came about after St. Francis College began demolition of the McGarry Library last year at 180 Rensselaer St.

"Some of them have been abused and knocked around, but they could be restored and really bought back to their best," he said, and called the proposed district a "real history lesson" on the days when "the best architects in New York City were working on the commercial buildings."

"The worry is that the [city] Landmarks Preservation Commission is just so overwhelmed with things that it just may take

See **HISTORIC** on page 13

City still mum on snow plow death

By Jess Wisloski
The Brooklyn Papers

Six weeks after a 10-year-old girl was struck and killed by a snowplow in Red Hook, the driver of the city plow has yet to come forward or be identified.

Police said they have narrowed the search for the driver in the Jan. 23 accident to one of four Department of Sanitation trucks plowing streets after a storm dumped nearly two feet of snow on the city, but add that their investigation remains incomplete.

Little Markita Weaver was sitting on a snow bank at Richards and Wolcott streets putting plastic bags over her shoes to play in the abundant white stuff when a plow making a turn onto Wolcott Street crushed her. Investigators believe the driver likely didn't see her as the truck went about its business after burying the bloodied girl in a pile of snow.

"I still don't know who the driver is, but they certainly do," said Beth Schlossman, an attorney for the Weaver family. The Weavers plan to sue the city.

The mayor's office paid for Weaver's funeral but had her mother sign a release acknowledging that the payment did not amount to an admission of guilt. Schlossman said she's waiting for the investigation to finish to file the Weaver family's lawsuit, but said this week, "We can't seem to get any answers."

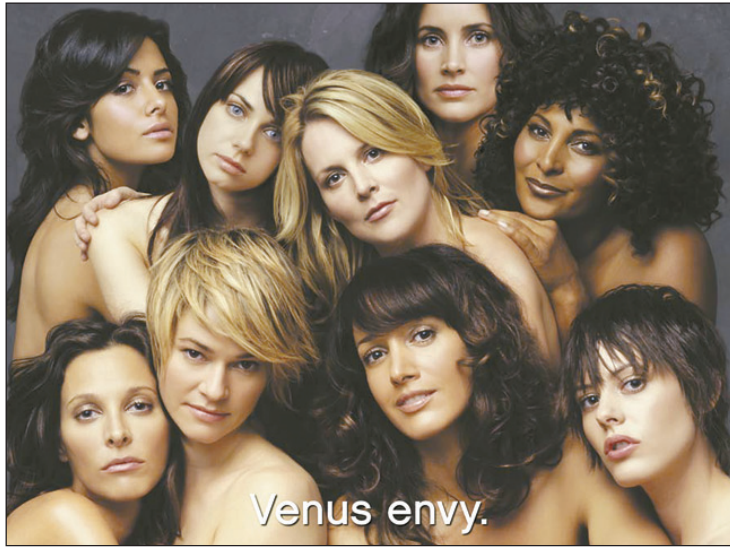
"They claim that with the evidence they hadn't been able to verify anything as yet," said the lawyer. Though a spokesman for Mayor Michael Bloomberg offered words of condolence after repeated calls by The Brooklyn Papers, the city hasn't yet to determine whether the Department of Sanitation is even responsible.

Asked if Sanitation had conducted its own investigation into the driver of the vehicle, spokeswoman Taryn Duckett replied, "That's not on us. When you have something as tragic as that is, it's an NYPD investigation."

The police department's deputy commissioner for public information, Paul Browne, did not return calls seeking comment for this article, but early

See **FLOW** on page 4

BKLYN STATE SENATOR TO CITY:



Venus envy.

Get 'The L' off bus shelters

By Jotham Sederstrom
The Brooklyn Papers

Marty Golden, Brooklyn's Republican-Conservative state senator, has his own L-word for ads promoting a lesbian-themed cable TV show called "The L Word" whose cast of sexy stars

lured only last month to coincide with the Feb. 20 premiere of the show's second season, the ad (a portion of which is pictured above) reveals a skin-tangled portrait of the series' stars, whose interlocked legs and arms cleverly conceal body parts that only premium cable can unlock. Among the bevy of bunched-up beauties,

"I've never even seen [this many] naked women," said a blushing Golden, who sent a Feb. 22 letter to the Department of Transportation calling for the advertisement's removal. "In communities like ours, it's not the type of ad that should be around. Young minds are vulnerable and I think these need to be in responsible locations."

Jennifer Beals, best known for her star turn in the movie "Flashdance," strategically crosses her arms to cover her chest while the series name runs just below. Above that is the phrase "Venus Envy."

The show also stars '70s action film star Pam Grier.

A far cry from Ralph and Alice Kramden, whose televised love affair in "The Honeymooners" was set in Bensonhurst, the season premiere of "The L Word" electrified TV sets with talk of suicide, an adulterous lesbian love triangle and unbridled sex in a public restroom. The gritty realism has garnered widespread praise from critics since the show premiered last year building on the premium cable net-

work's first gay hit, "Queer as Folk."

But despite heaps of acclaim, residents in Bay Ridge have doled out complaints on Golden, who said his office has received nearly a dozen calls since the ads were hoisted in all five boroughs, including at a bus shelter on Third Avenue at 77th Street.

His anger over the ads, he contends, stems from a concern that children will take a gander at the voluptuous vixens, not the fact that the characters are lesbians. Golden has consistently challenged businesses and entrepreneurs whose wares he believes are inappropriate for children, including a children's

See **L** on page 15

Commerce shows new look

By Jess Wisloski
The Brooklyn Papers

A community group in Park Slope whose initiative pressured Commerce Bank into scrapping plans for a drive-through repaid the rewards of their efforts Thursday when the bank unveiled a completely revamped plan for a new branch on Fifth Avenue.

In the new designs, neither a drive-through nor what members of the hastily formed group Park Slope Neighbors had termed a "big, glowing drive-by sign" are featured, delighting Aaron Napierstek, a transportation activist who founded the group to fight the plans for a drive-through at First Street.

"We really appreciate the way the bank listened and responded to our concerns," Napierstek said about the new plans,



which stray from the typical Commerce Bank look of a white, brick cottage with a brown, slatted, McDonalds-style roof.

"This is a much better plan than the one they had before," he said, and cited the immediate improvement of safety along the pedestrian-heavy sidewalks of Fifth Avenue with the elimination of the drive-through. Instead, a six-space parking lot is planned.

"This is an urban building, not a suburban building," Napierstek said. "The parking is behind the building, and the new building maintains the street wall. There's a big grand entrance on the corner of First Street and Fifth Avenue, with big plate-glass windows all along the sidewalk. There's a real welcoming feel to the building — it's a lot nicer to the neighborhood."

"They really went out of their way," he added.

See **COMMERCE** on page 13



Enough? I snow what you mean!

Brooklyn was hit with another 6 inches of snow overnight Monday. The white stuff painted a pretty picture along the Brooklyn Heights promenade, but most people were saying they are ready for spring already.

Charges dropped as Roper pays fee

But foe of DA Hynes could still be disbarred

By Jotham Sederstrom
The Brooklyn Papers

Embattled district attorney candidate Sandra Roper has agreed to pay nearly \$9,000 to the elderly woman accusing her of fraud in an unorthodox deal that will clear the attorney of all charges but may leave her vulnerable to political jabs.

While emphasizing that the agreement was neither an admission of guilt nor the result of a plea, Roper said that she would compensate \$8,829 to Mary Lee Ward, the former client whose accusations of fraud led to Roper being tried for grand larceny. A trial ended in a hung jury in November and she was about to be retried when the special prosecutor handling the case made Roper an offer she couldn't refuse.

Although she still faces possible disciplinary action, Roper is now free to focus on her campaign against Kings County District Attorney Charles Hynes.

"I am truly thankful that these false charges against me have been dismissed, finally," said Roper, flanked by supporters on the steps of Brooklyn Supreme Court Monday. "Indeed, these charges never should have been brought," she said. "Our courts, one of the best of institutions, are fair, but not infallible. As the next Brooklyn district attorney, I'll always remember that the purpose of American courts is to protect society and protect the rights of the individual accused."

See **ROPER** on page 14



Sandra Roper announces deal at state Supreme Court on Court Street Monday.

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Arrest suspect in \$4 mugging

By Jess Wisloski
 The Brooklyn Papers

Four muggers held up a Park Slope man at gunpoint and demanded everything he had on him on Feb. 22, which amounted to \$4 and a cell phone.

But shortly after the holdup a police officer from the 78th Precinct arrested a member of the thuggish crew and charged him with robbery and possession of a firearm.

The victim, 19, was walking along Fifth Avenue near Sixth Street just after midnight when he was approached by four black males, all unknown to him, who he described as in their early 20s.

As he was walking north on Fifth Avenue, the men cornered him at 12:15 am, and one, who wore a black ski mask and carried the handgun, helped shove him against the wall and demanded he empty his pockets.

Another of the men, a 17-year-old who was later arrested, removed the property, saying, "Give me your wallet," and took the money and cell phone from him.

A police canvass of the area led to the arrest, made by Police Officer Nelson Fernandez at 1:42 am.

Stepped on

Two women robbers distracted a Brooklyn Heights diner in the foyer of a restaurant by stepping on her toes as they picked her pocket on Feb. 15.

According to the victim, 25, who lives in the Heights, she was exiting Clarks restaurant, at the corner of Clark and Henry streets, at 2 pm, when two women entered.

One woman, who had dreadlocks and wore a fur coat, stepped on her feet, while the other woman pulled a wallet from the victim's front jacket pocket, the victim conjectured. She said she noticed the wallet was missing when she returned home.

Mountain biker

Burglars made off with two mountain bicycles, worth \$3,500, from the basement storage area of an apartment in Park Slope between Feb. 18 and Feb. 21.

The victim, 30, told police that he kept his Cannondale bikes secured in a downstairs storage closet. He said that when he left the apartment, on Pacific Street between Fourth and Fifth avenues, at 7 pm on Feb. 18,

POLICE BLOTTER

both bikes were still there.

Upon his return, at 5 pm on Feb. 21, he noticed both were gone. The victim told police there were no signs of forced entry, and he'd only been gone for the weekend.

Airbags taken

Thieves nabbed airbags from a black 2003 Acura sedan overnight between Feb. 21 and Feb. 22 in Park Slope.

The victim told police he'd parked the vehicle on First Street between Fifth and Sixth avenues at 5 pm the night before, but discovered the next morning, at 11:45 am, that the driver's-side window had been broken.

Honda heist

Car thieves made off with a 1997 Honda Civic parked in Boerum Hill sometime between Feb. 19 at 5:30 pm and Feb. 21 at 10:15 am.

The victim, who told police he was visiting a friend on Bergen Street, parked the car between Smith and Hoyt streets on Feb. 19, only doors from where he was staying.

But when he returned the morning of the 21st, he was unable to locate the vehicle, and found glass at the site where he'd left it. Tow records came up negative for the green four-door sedan.

Pineapple airlift

Thieves made off with a \$2,000 set of airbags from a 2003 Honda Civic parked in Brooklyn Heights overnight between Feb. 24 and Feb. 25.

Police say the victim left the vehicle parked on Pineapple Street between Henry and Hicks streets at 6 pm on Feb. 24, and returned the next day at noon. Upon his return, the owner of the car discovered the right side of the vehicle was smashed and both the driver and passenger airbags were missing.

Smith St. rob

Burglars broke into a parked car in Brooklyn Heights and made off with an installed DVD player and monitor, valued at \$1,200 and a 12-disc CD changer worth \$100, sometime between Feb. 12 and Feb. 25.

The victim, who lives on Columbia Place, reported he had left the 1997 Dodge Durango on Atlantic Avenue and Furman Street on Feb. 12 at 1 pm, and returned two weeks later at 12:30 pm to find thieves had broken into the car.

The front driver's-side door was damaged, and the victim, 27, told police the steering column was damaged as well.

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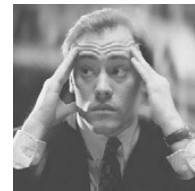
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5-alarm blaze at Navy Yard

By Jess Wisloski
The Brooklyn Papers

A fire that ripped through an electronics warehouse at the Brooklyn Navy Yard last Thursday quickly exploded into a four-alarm blaze that it took 168 fire-fighters from 39 trucks five hours to douse.

Despite the blazes on Feb. 24, which picked up shortly after the call was received, at 3:32 pm, the flames continued to lick upward, and the fire, which

started as a two-alarm catapulted to four-alarm status when, at 4:29 pm, an acetylene tank apparently ruptured and fueled the raging fire, according to a Fire Department spokesman.

Engines responded from all around the Downtown Brooklyn vicinity, and some Fire Department personnel busted through the Navy Yard gates at Cumberland Street and Flushing Avenue in Fort Greene. Other emergency responders, battling more than heat and visibility grew dim in the gray

light, had to cut their way through other gates in an attempt to get closer to the actual fire, inside Building 664 just off Vanderbilt Street.

Police called in from precincts citywide patrolled all entrances to Flushing Avenue, and stood guard, redirecting traffic away from any through streets along Park Avenue towards Flushing Avenue.

"We had probably about 10 to 15 or so officers there," reported a community affairs officer from the 88th Precinct, which covers Fort Greene and Clinton Hill. "We also had some specialized units," he said, but mentioned "It was really just the outskirts of the Navy Yard; we still had people on regular patrol in the area. We wouldn't leave patrol to take them off for the fire."

Two people were hospitalized, one a firefighter, at Long Island College Hospital. They were treated and released that day. Fire Department spokesman Bob Leonard said that according to a fire marshal's report, workers in Building 664 were "using cutting torches on steel beams, when a piece of molten steel fell on some combustible materials, starting a fire, and the stock ignited," he said.

"As the fire grew in intensity," he said, the explosive tank of gas erupted, "feeding the fire."

Contrary to earlier reports, the fire did not start in B & H Photo's portion of the 830-foot-long, 70-foot-wide warehouse, according to a spokesman from B & H. "I know it didn't start in our warehouse," said Henry Posner, vice president of communications at B & H. "Damage to B & H's facilities is practically nonexistent. Thank God no-



In like a lion

Jerusalem Street near Garden Place in Brooklyn Heights was a late-winter wonderland on March 1, 20 days before the start of spring.

body from B & H was injured," he said, adding the company was "99.5 percent unaffected. We had to stop work for a couple hours to let the firemen to do their magic thing."

"Certainly we defer our caps in appreciation for the Fire Department of the City of New York," added Posner. Sharing the building was the Meisels Industries Corporation,

which sells and manufactures wholesale and refurbished electronic equipment and supplies. Calls to a listed phone number were not returned by press time.

Also sharing the property were Mason Camera Supply and Superzone Electronics Inc., a combined company, as well as Dukes of Hazard Merchandise, which sells costumes.

According to records from May 2004, the city Art Commission reviewed an application to expand the three-story building to four stories last year, though Department of Buildings records did not show that any work had begun on the building, or if the work with the I-beams may have been related to construction.

The property borders Build-

ing 296, one of the lots that is to be used for the new Steiner Film Studios, to the east.

A spokesman for the Brooklyn Navy Yard Development Corporation heralded the commitment of responding police and fire units in a statement.

"Because protecting the safety and security of our tenants is the Brooklyn Navy Yard's highest priority, we appreciated the Fire Department's rapid response to last Thursday's fire," wrote Steve Vioff, a spokesman for the Navy Yard from the Marino Organization. "Damage was isolated to a portion of a single building. Except for that one site, the Navy Yard has always remained open for business."

The fire was under control by 8:28 pm.

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LEGAL NOTICES

NOTICE OF SALE. SUPREME COURT, KINGS COUNTY, NEW YORK. WILLIAM RANK MINNEOTA, NATIONAL ASSOCIATION AS TRUSTEE, Plaintiff vs. MANGUEL PEREZ et al., Defendants. Attorney (for Plaintiff): Roselli & Associates, P.C., 152 14th Avenue, Suite 18, Bklyn, New York 11211. 284-6478. Pursuant to judgment of foreclosure and sale entered herein on or about January 11, 2005, I will sell at Public Auction to the highest bidder at room 261 of the Court of Kings County, New York 11201. On April 7, 2005 at 3:00 PM, in room 007, grants me rights to Assume the name of: Frank James. My present address is 295 East 5th Street, Brooklyn, New York 11218. My place of birth is Brooklyn, NY. My date of birth is January 10, 1985. Notice is hereby given that an Order entered by the Civil Court, Kings County on the 28th day of February, 2005, bearing the Index Number N0001002005, a copy of which may be examined at the Office of the Clerk, located at CIVIL COURT, KINGS COUNTY, 141 Livingston Street, Brooklyn, New York 11201, in room 007, grants me rights to Assume the name of: Frank James. My present address is 295 East 5th Street, Brooklyn, New York 11218. My place of birth is Brooklyn, NY. My date of birth is January 10, 1985. Notice is hereby given that an Order entered by the Civil Court, Kings County on the 28th day of February, 2005, bearing the Index Number N0001002005, a copy of which may be examined at the Office of the Clerk, located at CIVIL COURT, KINGS COUNTY, 141 Livingston Street, Brooklyn, New York 11201, in room 007, grants me rights to Assume the name of: Edwin Fernandez Delator. My present address is 295 East 5th Street, Brooklyn, NY 11218. My place of birth is Brooklyn, NY. 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Rash of car thefts hits Slope

By Jess Wisloski
The Brooklyn Papers

A rash of car thefts hit Park Slope in February, according to police reports.

In one 10-day stretch eight grand larceny auto reports were filed, and four break-ins and several airbag thefts were reported in the area bounded by Prospect Park West, 14th Street, Sixth Avenue and Berkeley Place.

Car thieves made off with a black, 1997 Honda Accord sometime between Feb. 9 at 6 pm,

when the owner said she'd parked it, and Feb. 10 at 7:45 am.

The vehicle was on Fifth Street between Sixth and Seventh avenues, and the woman, 49, lived just down away from where it was stolen. No broken glass was found at the scene of the crime, police noted.

Sometime between Feb. 8 and Feb. 10, thieves made off with a green 1997 Acura Integra that had been parked just two blocks down, on Seventh Street.

The owner, 26, told police she'd left the two-door sedan

there at 11 pm the first night, and returned at 3 pm on Feb. 10 to find her car gone with no sign of broken glass.

The same area fell victim to three airbag thefts over the course of a week, starting with two thieves who broke into a car on Eighth Avenue between Feb. 3 and Feb. 5.

The victim, 24, found the driver's-side window of her gray 2003 Chevrolet Cavalier smashed, and the airbags, worth \$2,000, missing from the front passenger's seat dashboard and

the driver's side. She told police she'd left it parked between Fifth and Sixth streets from Feb. 3 at 6 pm to Feb. 5 at 6 pm.

Nearby, an Enterprise rental car, also a Chevy Cavalier, but this one a green 2005 model, that was parked on Fourth Street between Eighth Avenue and Prospect Park West was robbed of its airbags. The renter told police she'd parked the car on Feb. 9 at 6 pm and returned the next morning at 7 am to find it had been broken into.

With damage to the steering wheel column, and smashed windows, she noticed that the airbags, worth \$2,000, were missing as well, and had to call Enterprise to remove the vehicle.

Thieves made off with even more airbags on Fourth Street between Feb. 6 at 10 pm and Feb. 10 at 8 am, on the same

block, according to police reports.

The victim, 36, found her blue 2003 Acura sedan had the passenger-side rear window smashed, and her airbags, worth \$2,000, were gone.

Thieves also robbed a 2003 Mitsubishi Eclipse, sometime between Feb. 9 at 8 am and Feb. 10 at 2:50 pm.

The New Jersey owner, 28, told police he'd parked the vehicle on Berkeley Place near Sixth Avenue, and when he returned the airbags were gone.

Just to the east thieves made off with a black 2000 Honda Civic parked at Prospect Park West between Montgomery Place and Garfield Place sometime between Feb. 5 at 5 pm and Feb. 9 at 9:30 am.

Not happy with just airbags, thieves snatched a black 2003

Dodge Dakota between Feb. 12 at 4 pm, when the Long Island owner, 32, parked it and Feb. 13 at 10:30 am. The victim parked the car on President Street near Fifth Avenue, but found no car upon his return.

The owner of a white 1986 Cadillac Seville, parked on Fifth Street between Fourth and Fifth Avenues, discovered his car was gone on Feb. 12 at 2:30 pm.

The owner told police he'd left the car parked there on Feb. 8 at 10:50 am, and when he went to retrieve it found no broken glass. Tow records turned up negative.

And the larcenies didn't stop there.

Moving south, thieves continued their reign of mass car theft, snatching a classic Oldsmobile from near Prospect Park.

They stole the gray 1978 Delta four-door from Prospect Park West between 13th and 14th streets where it was parked on Feb. 7, sometime between 7:30 am and 7:45 pm.

That same day, thieves broke into a black 2003 Toyota Land Rover four-door that belonged to a Canarsie woman, 31. She told police she'd left it parked between Feb. 7 at 2:30 pm and the next day at 5:26 pm. No broken glass was found at the site where she'd left it, on Sixth Avenue between 11th and 12th streets.

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LEGAL NOTICES

Notice is hereby given that an Order entered by the Civil Court, Kings County on the 23rd day of February, 2005, bearing the Index Number N001182005, a copy of which may be examined at the Office of the Clerk, located at CIVIL COURT, KINGS COUNTY, 141 Livingston Street, Brooklyn, New York 11201, in room 002, grants me rights to Assume the name of: **Jessie Anne Hechtall**. My present name is: **Jessie Anne Hechtall**. My present address is: 392 Prospect Place, 4th Floor, Brooklyn, NY 11218. My place of birth is: Brooklyn, New York. My date of birth is: December 4, 1944. (PS)

Notice is hereby given that an Order entered by the Civil Court, Kings County on the 23rd day of February, 2005, bearing the Index Number N001182005, a copy of which may be examined at the Office of the Clerk, located at CIVIL COURT, KINGS COUNTY, 141 Livingston Street, Brooklyn, New York 11201, in room 002, grants me rights to Assume the name of: **David George Leno**. My present name is: **David George Leno**. My present address is: 95 - 4th Avenue, Apt. 4, Brooklyn, NY 11217. My place of birth is: Brooklyn, NY. My date of birth is: January 21, 1904. (PS)

Notice of the formation: **SUNRISE ORTHODONTICS, LLC**, a domestic Professional Limited Liability Company (LLC), Articles of Organization filed with Secretary of State on 10/6/04. NY office located: **KINGS COUNTY**, Secretary of State is designated an agent upon whom process against the LLC may be served. Secretary of State shall mail a copy of any process against the LLC served upon member to: The LLC, 450 48th Street, Brooklyn, NY 11220. Purpose: To engage in the profession of orthodonty. (PS)

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MTA on let's site: 'Bid Away'

But agency adds, 'Don't expect us to change rail yards zoning'

By Jess Wisloski
The Brooklyn Papers

Responding to calls by elected officials and activists that the Metropolitan Transportation Authority open up the sale of development rights over rail yards at Atlantic and Flatbush avenues to competitive bidding, as the agency has

done with the Hudson Yards in Manhattan, an agency spokesman reiterated what he told The Brooklyn Papers last month — they already are.

The spokesman, Tom Kelly, told The Brooklyn Papers this week that developers other than Bruce Ratner — who proposes to build a basketball arena over the rail yards that would be part of an overall plan including 17 high-rise office and residential buildings — are free to submit proposals for the development rights over the Long Island Rail Road storage yards. Kelly said the same thing in a Feb. 12 Brooklyn Papers report.

The announcement first came following comments by MTA Chairman Peter Kalikow at a state Assembly hearing Feb. 3, where he told Westchester Assemblyman Richard Brodsky that all developments related to Ratner's proposal, Atlantic Yards, are on hold until the bidding war over the West Side rail yards in Manhattan was worked out.

"There are very serious considerations," said Councilwoman Letitia James, whose Prospect Heights district includes the Atlantic Yards proposal where Ratner plans to bring the New Jersey Nets, which he purchased last summer, to play in a 19,000-seat arena. "As soon as the bidding is open for competition there will be serious bids submitted," she said. "There will be alternate bids submitted."

Thus far, no other developer has come to the MTA with a proposal for the rail yards. Kelly said that unlike the West Side battle, there is no timeline or pending deadline for the sale, therefore no request for proposals (RFP) must be issued.

"Because there is no competition at this point," said Tom Kelly, a spokesman for the MTA, "there is no need for a deadline as was the case with the West Side Yards," he said, referring to the Manhattan site where the Jets and Mayor Michael Bloomberg want to build a football stadium that would also be the centerpiece of the NYC 2012 Olympic bid.

In recent weeks Cablevision, which owns Madison Square Garden and has sought to block development of the West Side stadium, as well as Trans Gas Energy, have come up with bids

that would pay the MTA much more than the Jets' initial \$100 million bid.

But James remains wary. "Good," she said of the potential for an RFP over the Atlantic Avenue rail yards. "We would consider it, but in order to consider it you have to submit a notice — There has been no notice. In order to go forward and receive bids there has to be some sort of notice and no notice has been published."

But Kelly insisted one wouldn't appear. "Nothing has transpired over there," he said, including an anticipated appraisal of the value of the Atlantic Yards, "and, again, anyone who's interested in it can come forth and make a bid," he said.

The 13 acres of land on the West Side of Manhattan were valued by an independent appraisal as being worth \$900 million. The MTA committed to conducting a similar appraisal for the value of the Atlantic Yards air rights.

"We're in the process of doing that right now," said Kelly. Meanwhile, on the West Side the value of bids has run against the wall of zoning, and the value that zoning permitted on the site — which is now only allowed for manufacturing uses — hinders how much many bidders are willing to pay up front.

At an MTA hearing last week, Tri-State Transportation Alternatives spokeswoman Teresa Toro urged the MTA board for "an independent appraisal" based on future use, and the process should allow open competition for multiple parcels of the properties. This should be done for both the Hudson Rail Yards and the Atlantic Rail Yards in Downtown Brooklyn," she said.

But this week, Councilman Tony Avella urged the City Council to dismiss attempts by Speaker Gifford Miller to forego approval by what is normally a key committee in the determination of zoning changes for the ceding of Manhattan's Hudson Yards, the zoning and franchises subcommittee, which Avella chairs.

Avella said he explained in his Feb. 24 State of the City address, is to rezone the 13 acres so competing bids to the Jets' would enjoy the same privilege



The MTA rail yards at Atlantic Avenue where Bruce Ratner wants to build an arena for his N.J. Nets.

as the football team, whose zoning override has already been granted by the Empire State Development Corporation.

"The state defers to the city on zoning issues," said Deborah Wetzel, a spokeswoman for the Empire State Development Corporation, the state agency in charge of disposal of state-owned land.

We would not override the zoning without the city's consent," she said, and said the Jets' override, and any override, was evaluated on a per-project basis.

"Zoning override is project-specific. For example, if a new project came along, they would not automatically be granted a new override as the Jets were," she said. "We'd have to go through a new process."

Wetzel also said that the city-state partnership was identical to the one that will proceed for Ratner's Atlantic Yards plan. Asked if Forest City Ratner or the Nets had been granted a zoning override for the Atlantic Yards, she said, "We're not even involved in that project yet — the negotiations are still going on."

And this week, according to Bloomberg News Service, the Nets move to Brooklyn was announced to be "more likely" to happen in the 2008-2009 basketball season, according to Ratner. And it may take even longer, the Ratner team is, like the Jets, trying to pass off the costs of building a platform over the rail yards onto the MTA. Kelly said the authority would favor bids with fewest liabilities.

We are not taking on any liabilities in connection with the sale of the property," said Kelly, "including rezoning," meaning, the most offered up front, at no additional expense or stipulations of platform payments by the MTA, or revenue taken from the bid amount, would be considered priority.

As to when the public could expect a value assignment, Kelly said he didn't know offhand, and the zoning may have an effect on the property as well.

"I don't know, offhand," he admitted. "But anything that we did on the Atlantic Yards would be similar when it comes to zoning as we did in the West Side yards, meaning we're not going to get involved."

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The Brooklyn Papers' essential guide to the Borough of Kings

March 5, 2005

Boding romance

BBG displays a treasure trove of botanical art

By Lisa J. Curtis
GO Brooklyn Editor

The set of engravings of plants in the Brooklyn Botanic Garden's new exhibit, "Banks' Florilegium: An Eighteenth-Century Botanical Art Treasure Rediscovered," is of interest to everyone from scientists, to lovers of botanical art to those who love a good old-fashioned story of adventure on the high seas.

Curated by Patricia Jonas, the Garden's director of library services, these engravings are based on the botanical drawings of artist Sydney Parkinson while aboard Captain James Cook's voyage around the world on the Endeavour from 1768 to 1771. Out of the 743 color engravings (in the Garden's collection) that are made from his works, Jonas culled just 36 for this exhibit.

The collection of engravings, Banks' Florilegium, is named for Joseph Banks, the British naturalist who with Daniel Solander collected more than 30,000 plants in Brazil, Tierra del Fuego, Society Islands (Tahiti), New Zealand, Australia and Java.

Jonas said she started whittling down the number of images to be displayed by first including representatives of each of the countries the botanists visited, but she also chose some that are represented in the Botanic Garden's own collections, and labels them as such, so visitors can see the engraving and then seek out its living counterpart.

"Of the 743 plants in the Florilegium, Banksians were an easy choice for me: Banks and Solander were the first Europeans to see this important Australian genus and it was the genus later named for Banks," said Jonas. "Banksia includes over 70 species but Banksia serrata is fairly widespread and has the colorful common name, 'Old Man Banksia.' We also have an herbarium specimen of that plant on display and a small plant in our living collection."

"I also tried to choose those that had a good story or were visually exciting," she continued. "For instance, one of the weedy plants I chose is an endangered plant, Cook's Scurvy Grass from Australia. It's not much to look at, but it's an anticorbatic — it has properties that help fend off scurvy, which was a terrible scourge of long sea voyages. They collected a lot of this on the trip, so I included a story about scurvy."

Jonas said that after most of the voyage was over, only five passengers on the Endeavour had scurvy and there were no deaths from it, "as opposed to Magellan's voyage where 80 percent of the crew died of scurvy," she said.

While he did not die from scurvy, Parkinson did die of fever six months before the end of the voyage, said Jonas. So Banks commissioned other artists to finish Parkinson's paintings, which had meticulous notes, and engravings were then made from those paintings. Upon landing, "Cook's considerable cartographic accomplishments were overshadowed in 1771 by the dazzling natural wonders collected and cataloged by Joseph Banks and Daniel Solander and painted by Sydney Parkinson," explain the exhibition panels. Despite this success, prints were not made from the Endeavour engravings until



Wallflowers: (Clockwise from top) An etching of Banksia serrata on display in the Brooklyn Botanic Garden's exhibit "Banks' Florilegium: An Eighteenth-Century Botanical Art Treasure Rediscovered"; curator Patricia Jonas; and herbarium specimens from Australia of the *Metrosideros collina* and the *horsetail tree*.

1983.

"Banks hired 18 engravers to create three tons of copper plates that were engraved, and then it was never printed and why is a matter of speculation," said Jonas. "In the 1980s, a

fine press, Alecote Editions, approached the natural history museum in England to publish it for the very first time and that's what we're looking at in the Garden's exhibit. The [original] paintings and the copper plates are still in

ART

"The Banks' Florilegium: An Eighteenth-Century Botanical Art Treasure Rediscovered" is on display now through April 10 in the Brooklyn Botanic Garden's Steinhardt Conservatory (900 Washington Ave., at Eastern Parkway in Prospect Heights). Free with garden admission; \$5, \$3 seniors and students with valid ID, free for children age 15 and younger. For more information, call (718) 623-7200 or visit the Web site at www.bbg.org.

their collection, where they sat for 200 years.

"So it's an amazing publishing story, too," said Jonas. "My original background was in publishing, so I've been involved in projects that took a long time — but not 200 years — to bring to completion."

Although Alecote only printed 100 copies of the Banks Florilegium, the Botanic Garden received its own copy of the 743 engravings as a gift from the family of the late Robert Duemmer Jr. in 2003. The prints on display are culled from this set.

While the paintings of plants in far-off lands represented in the Banks Florilegium were fascinating for 18th-century natural history buffs and royalty alike ("King George III devoted two weeks after the triumphant return of the Endeavour to studying the drawings," according to the exhibition notes), botanical art continues to be an important way of collecting qualitative information about a plant and its seed, fruit and flowers for today's scientists, explained Jonas.

"Botanical art itself is still favored over photography because of the universal detail it can capture and put into one illustration," said Jonas. "A photograph may take many angles, many times of the year but there have to be multiple images, where a botanical artist can and does paint the plant in one painting in various times of the year. The painting would include a rendering of the flower, seed and important details for identifying the plant — all on one illustration."

"I'm also curator of a contemporary florilegium, the Brooklyn Botanic Garden Florilegium, a multi-year project in record in watercolor, oil, and pen and ink the living collection at BBG," said Jonas. "Some of the United States' finest botanical artists paint the living collections here... And we do something very similar [to 18th century botanists]: painting the specimen while it's still fresh, before it wilts and fades, and we are collecting the specimens and drying and pressing them. Both of these records are essentially permanent records of the Brooklyn Botanic Garden and the plants that grow here."

While Banks and his entourage were aboard the Endeavour to collect specimens and data about the landscape, people and plants they came across on the journey, the primary reason for the voyage to Tahiti, which had recently been named King George III's Island by Captain Samuel Wallis, was to record the transit of Venus, in a larger attempt to compute the distance between the Earth and the sun. So the Botanic Garden's exhibit also includes information about that undertaking, excerpts from Banks and Parkinson's meticulous journals, actual dried plant specimens from the Endeavour voyage and a reproduction of Parkinson's sketch of a kangaroo — which is probably the first ever made by a European.

Said Jonas, "This exhibit is interesting to botanical artists working today, and to botanists for the information that it contains about plants and specimens that were first collected of those plants, and to people interested in the romantic story of this great voyage."

DANCE

Two premieres

Ballet aficionados have something to look forward to on March 6, when Colorado Ballet returns to the Brooklyn Center for the Performing Arts for the third time.

"Colorado Ballet represents an important regional company in the [World of Dance] series," said Brooklyn Center's managing director Cheri Walsh, describing the Colorado company's dancers as "versatile with a wonderful classical training."

"But they can do anything, even modern dance," she said.

Colorado Ballet's performance is part of the Brooklyn Center for the Performing Arts World of Dance series, whose goal is to present great dance at modest prices, Walsh told GO Brooklyn. And giving regional companies a chance to shine in this country's cultural capital is just another perk of the series.

"It's so crucial for the regional companies to get exposure in New York," Walsh said.

In its 44th season — under the guidance of artistic director and CEO Martin Fredmann since 1987 — Colorado Ballet is one of the state's oldest and most successful arts organizations. Founded by native Denverites Lillian Covillo and the late Fredmann Parker as a ballet school in 1951, the company now consists of 37 national and international professional dancers and 15 apprentice dancers, has an eclectic repertoire and a \$7 million budget.

"[Colorado Ballet] is a repository company that leans toward the classical side," Walsh said, "with very diverse programming."

Among the dances planned for the Brooklyn Center performance are two New York premieres: "Rachmaninov's Concerto" by choreographer Konstantin Ural'sky and an untitled dance choreographed by Darrell Moultrie.

Colorado Ballet will perform at the Brooklyn Center for the Performing Arts on March 6 at 2 pm at Brooklyn College's Walt Whitman Theatre, one block from the junction of Flatbush and Nostrand avenues. Tickets are \$35. For reservations call (718) 951-4500. For more information visit the Web site at www.brooklyn-center.com.

— Aja Grodzinski



MUSIC

New classics

Far from being museum pieces that are only performed exactly as written, many classical works come in different versions, whether reinterpreted (or even rearranged) by the composer himself or reconstructed by someone else.

For its next Brooklyn Museum concert, on March 6, the St. Luke's Chamber Ensemble plays three Romantic Era masterpieces in versions usually not heard. In the case of Wagner's lovely lullaby for his young son, "Siegfried Idyll" (1870), the ensemble performs the original arrangement for flute, oboe, two clarinets, bassoon, two horns, trumpet and strings.

(It's usually heard in a more voluptuous string-orchestra arrangement.)

Francis Liszt's 1840 "Malediction" was originally composed for piano and string orchestra. But this concerto-like work will be performed in a stripped-down arrangement for piano and string quintet. Pianist Jeffrey Swann (pictured) takes the demanding solo part in this performance.

The final work on this program, Johannes Brahms' "Serenade" (1859) was originally composed as a sonnet (flute, bassoon, horn, violin, viola, cello, bass, two clarinets), but after creating an arrangement for chamber orchestra, Brahms' original was lost. This notion version was reconstructed by Alan Bousted, and was first heard in 1987.

The final St. Luke's Chamber Ensemble concert is May 15, when an all-baroque program includes music by Bach and Handel.

The St. Luke's Chamber Ensemble performs Wagner, Liszt and Brahms on March 6, at 2 pm, in the Cantor Auditorium, Brooklyn Museum of Art, 200 Eastern Parkway at Washington Avenue in Prospect Heights. Tickets are \$25, \$18 for museum members, students and senior rush seats available one hour before the concert. For more information, call (212) 594-6100 or visit www.orchestraofstluks.com. — Kevin Filipski

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Neighborhood Dining Guide

This week: FORT GREENE

BAMcafe

Brooklyn Academy of Music, 30 Lafayette Ave. at Ashland Place, 2nd floor, (718) 636-4139 (AmEx, Disc, MC, Visa) Entrees: \$15-\$18. * Lively and funky crowds pepper the last-back atmosphere of this pre-show place-to-be. Great Performances, the city's largest catering company, recently took over operations. Executive chef Carlos Baca's menu features roasted free-range chicken with tamarind-glazed apples; Marjolaine braised lamb shank with rosemary polenta and roasted root vegetables; and anguilla mozarella ravioli with organic plum tomato and basil sauce. A light entree special is served daily.

BAMcafe offers live music on Friday and Saturday nights, when there is no cover, but a \$10 minimum food or drink order is required. (On those evenings, an abbreviated dinner menu is offered with \$9 to \$15-entrees.) For more information about future performances, see Brooklyn Nightlife on page 12. Open for dinner Thursdays through Saturdays, from 5 p.m. also open on other days of the week two hours prior to performances in the BAM Opera House or BAM Theater.

Butta' Cup

271 Adelphi St. at Dekalb Avenue, (718) 522-1669 (AmEx, Disc, MC, Visa) Entrees: \$11-\$30. Set in a Fort Greene brownstone, Mike "Milo" Odom's seductive lounge is decorated with sexy leopard print and vintage furniture. Start with something spicy — jerk wings or the Cantonese-style saffron-pepper jumbo shrimp. Chef Francisco Patrino's "rain forest" menu features customer favorites like the salmon Japanese, Li' Big Daddy's fried chicken, sweet potato pie, apple pie or homemade red velvet cake. But don't limit yourself to just the food. Butta' Cup's two bars serve some of the coolest cocktails around — all you-can-eat brunch on Sundays, "Blunch," or brunch and lunch, is served weekdays. Garden seats available in season. Open daily for lunch and dinner.

Chez Oskar

211 DeKalb Ave. at Adelphi Street, (718) 822-6250, www.chezoskar.com (AmEx, Disc, MC, Visa) Entrees: \$14-\$19. * Chez Oskar offers some of the best French bistro fare — with hints of the Caribbean — in Brooklyn. And what goes better with oyster Denis Coste's delicious French staples than a bottle of wine from an affordable list? Whether you're looking for the escargot, the lamb shank with couscous or the steak frites, the four-les chocolate cake is a perfect ending. Brunch is served Saturdays and Sundays, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Sidewalk cafe seats available, weather permitting. Open daily for lunch and dinner.

Liquors

219 DeKalb Ave. at Clermont Avenue, (718) 488-7700 (AmEx, MC, Visa) Entrees: \$11-\$20. While Liquors does have a cozy bar and lounge area, a reputation for wicked molasses, and a wine list, this African-Diaspora-influenced restaurant took its name from the sign left by the previous tenant. "We thought it was beautiful and worthy of keeping," says owner Christian Denny. The bohemian space, with its weathered walls, creates a warm and comforting feeling. You can enjoy your meal inside, or in warmer months in the garden. Chef Idris Mohammed serves specialties such as Cajun catfish with wilted greens, hiki-crusted salmon with a soy-ginger paste over coconut and cashew rice, and mango barbecue chicken served with sautéed string beans. Desserts include a tropical fruit type used charges daily, creme brulee. Open weekdays for dinner, and for brunch and dinner on the weekends.

Lou Lou

222 DeKalb Ave. at Clermont Avenue, (718) 244-0333 (AmEx, MC, Visa) Entrees: \$14-\$18. * Lou Lou has a cozy atmosphere with rustic tables, exposed brick walls and a lovely garden. A signature dish from chef William Smith's French menu is his seafood bouillabaisse in a coconut curry broth. Smith also recommends the deer scallop coupe in a vermouth and portobello cream sauce. A \$19 three-course prix fixe menu is offered Mondays through Thursdays. On 2-for-1 Thursdays, get two entrees for the price of one, and Mondays are corkage-free. Open for lunch, dinner, brunch on the weekends from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

★ = Full review available at

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papers.com

Abbreviation Key: AmEx= American Express, DC= Diner's Club, Disc= Discover Card, MC= MasterCard, Visa= Visa Card



Chef Thomas Ferlesch serves Viennese food at Thomas Beisl.

Mo-Bay Restaurant

112 DeKalb Ave. at Ashland Place, (718) 246-2800, www.mobayrestaurant.com (AmEx, DC, Disc, MC, Visa) Entrees: \$8.75-\$16.75. * If Caribbean, soul and vegetarian food are what you fancy, then Mo-Bay restaurant is the place to be. Mo-Bay's beach hut interior, fresh-cut flowers and reggae music give the place a cool, island vibe. Owner Sheron Barnes' popular dishes include the curry coconut salmon, brown-stewed chicken and oxtail stew. For vegetarians, there's the brown-stewed "veggie" chicken, curry "veggie" chicken, barbecue "veggie" chicken and "veggie" salmon (made from soy protein). The dessert menu offers Mo-Bay's famous "rummy rum cake," vanilla cake soaked in three types of rum and served warm with vanilla ice cream — a slice of heaven. Daily lunch specials. Open Monday through Saturday for lunch and dinner, and Sundays from 3 p.m. to 10 p.m.

Pequena

86 S. Portland Ave. at Lafayette Avenue, (718) 643-0000 (Cash only) Entrees: \$10-\$16. At Chelsea Almon's Pequena, which means "little one," try the house-made chips with pico de gallo or smoky chipotle salsa to start. Chef Bernardino Martinez's entrees include a wide variety of tostadas, quesadillas, fajitas and tacos, or try the poblanillo relleno, a poblano pepper stuffed with cheese or spicy beef hash and topped with a spicy tomato salsa. Dessert ranges from key lime pie to chocolate ancho chili cake. Daily lunch specials. Brunch served from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on weekends. Open daily for lunch and dinner.

Stonehome Wine Bar

87 Lafayette Ave. at South Portland Avenue, (718) 624-6443, www.stonehomebar.com (AmEx, MC, Visa) Entrees: \$4-\$12. Chef Stacie Lynn serves up light fare including warm citrus marinated shrimp with arugula, cucumber and tropical fruit, wild mushroom ravioli with herb butter and grilled steak with green pepper, or smoky chicken sliders. Desserts include flourless chocolate cake, vanilla almond pudding and red velvet cake. Offers a selection of 14 wines, including 25 by the glass and 5 different tasting flights. Open for dinner Tuesday through Sunday.

Sugarhill Supper Club

615 DeKalb Ave. at Northstrand Avenue, (718) 797-1727 (AmEx, Disc, MC, Visa) Entrees \$9.95-\$24.95. Sugarhill Supper Club has been serving up Southwestern cuisine since 1993. If you're hungry late on a weekend night, it's open 24 hours on Fridays and Saturdays. With a nightclub downstairs and three full bars, things are kept lively. Manager Alexia Freeman recommends the popular crab cakes. Live entertainment performs four nights a week. Open Mondays and Thursdays from 8 a.m. to 10:30 p.m., Tuesdays and Wednesdays from 8 a.m. to 7 p.m., and continuously from Friday at 8 a.m. until Sunday at 7 p.m.

Thomas Beisl

25 Lafayette Ave. at Ashland Place, (718) 222-6890 (AmEx, Disc, MC, Visa) Entrees: \$15-\$18. * In 1981, Thomas Ferlesch became the first 23-year-old chef awarded a coveted four stars from New York Times dining critic Mimi Sheraton. Now, this Austrian-born chef whips up his Viennese dishes for Brooklyn patrons in his own restaurant, Thomas Beisl, just across the street from the Brooklyn Academy of Music.

The menu, crowded with exotic ingredients and names accented by umami, pays homage to the diversity of Viennese cooking. Try the beef "gulyash," served with "spätzle" and tender braised beef cheeks, or the gravlax, marinated salmon with mustard and dill sauce. Top off dinner with the apple strudel served with "schlitz" (homemade wildflower cream) or "palatschinken," a crepe dish stuffed with your choice of apricot jam or hazelnut and chocolate. If you are on the way to BAM, stop in for a pre-theater drink and try the "Egon Schiele," a champagne cocktail with elderberry syrup named after the Austrian-born artist. Outdoor seating with a heated patio is available year-round. On Monday nights, a three-course \$18.95 prix fixe menu is served. Open for lunch Tuesday through Friday, weekend brunch from 10:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., and dinner every night.



Sea change

Mare Blu's welcoming interior & consistent Italian menu are improvement over predecessor

By Tina Barry
for The Brooklyn Papers

Like marriage, restaurants begin with the best intentions. And, like a union doomed from the beginning, they'll close — sometimes months later — with the owners saying, "Why didn't we see the problems from the start?"

Giuseppe Salvitti, the owner of Aqua, an ambitious seafood restaurant that opened in April, and shut its doors six months later, probably asked himself that question.

Aqua was up-scale for Smith Street where most bistros aim for a laid-back ambience. In the dining room, honey accents fought modern furnishings in a no-win battle. The menu offered less than a chef's interest in experimentation than an unsuccessful attempt to offer something for everyone.

Mare Blu is the eatery that Salvitti, who also operates Savoia on Smith Street, opened in Aqua's place. It's everything the original restaurant was not. Gone are the chilly white and seafoam walls. Now the room is

warmed with sunny golds and sage green. Awful prints are replaced with Italian movie posters and photographs of fishing villages. The wooden curves that line the ceiling, a reference to ship hulls and an original Aqua touch, remain. In this setting, they're like arms caressing the room.

But most importantly, the menu by new chef Jose Lema plants itself in Italy and doesn't budge.

As soon as you're seated, the waitress drops a basket filled with the kind of tender-centered, brittle-crusted bread you wish every restaurant served. With it comes a bottle of extra-virgin olive oil and saucer so you can do a pour and dunk till you drop. A tiny dish of little mouth-puckering olives and tangy radishes accompany the bread.

My guest and I were still chilled from our dash from the car to the restaurant — a good 10 feet. The bowl of wild mushroom soup with its potent aroma of the forest warmed us.

Lema makes a fine version of linguine with clams, an entree that we shared as an appetizer. The sauce is light, briny and scattered with whole



Today's catch: At Mare Blu restaurant on Smith Street, Chef Jose Lema serves up an array of seafood dishes, such as the tuna tartar with ginger, chives, capers and yellow peppers (top left) and grilled, wild striped sea bass with garlic potatoes (above).

roasted garlic cloves. The large bowl is ringed with tender, sweet baby clams in their shells and brightened with the deep green leaves of anguilla.

I loved my bronzino (which I think they should return to the menu) just as much. The delicate sea bass is grilled until the skin is crisp and the flesh was silky with a perfectly browned-sugar crust; the zabaglione, a frothy custard, needed another splash of Marsala wine to give it the kick it needs.

While Aqua wasn't at home in the neighborhood, Mare Blu is. And you can feel just how right it is as soon as you sit down. The room bustles quietly; diners linger over the meals; and the waitresses are happy, not harried.

And that linguine with clam sauce is worth a trip — even with a frigid wind whipping down Smith Street.

Take it slow

There's nothing more satisfying on a cold night than sitting beside a fireplace, listening to the logs crackle and watching the embers fly. Add a dinner made with organic ingredients and cooked slowly, and you have one blissful evening. Such an experience is the aim of David and Laura Shea, whose restaurant Applewood opened in Park Slope in September.

The Sheas — she's the front of the house presence; he's the chef — are disciples of the "Slow Food" movement, whose followers believe in bringing back the pleasure of cooking simple ingredients with care, and taking the time to enjoy it.

The Sheas buy their provisions from small, local farms and nearby fisheries, producing such dishes as cauliflower grain with whole-grain mustard and baguette crouton topping, and braised Berkshire pork belly with caramelized apples and apple cider glaze. At Applewood, grilled loin of venison with roasted sweet potatoes are partnered with a saute of endive and Brussels sprouts and served with brandied cherry sauce.

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— Tina Barry

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Dear diary

Playwright brings aging aunt's journal to the stage in 'Beautiful Hills of Brooklyn'

By Paulanne Simmons
for The Brooklyn Papers

Fifteen years ago, Ellen Cassidy inherited an old bureau from her aunt, Jessie Sylvester. In that bureau she found a diary that inspired her to write a play, "Beautiful Hills of Brooklyn," which will be featured at the March 5 First Saturday event at the Brooklyn Museum.

Cassidy, who was born in Brooklyn Heights but now lives in a Maryland suburb of Washington, D.C., told GO Brooklyn by phone, "My aunt started keeping the diary after she retired as a secretary in 1976. The diary covers two-and-a-half years in the late 1970s."

"Beautiful Hills of Brooklyn" is a one-act, one-woman show performed by actress Joanna Merlin in the role of Jessie Sylvester. It runs a little less than one hour, but in that time it faithfully

chronicles not only the day-to-day life of Jessie Sylvester between the ages of 76 and 79, but also the "sounds and tastes of Brooklyn," says Cassidy.

"At first my aunt's life seemed very small," said Cassidy. "I didn't think there'd be anything interesting about my aunt's going to the grocery store, going to the Botanic Garden, going to visit her sister in the hospital. But I found myself mesmerized by what it is to lead a small, modest life as an elderly woman confronting the challenges of aging."

The daily routine of an ex-secretary was of particular interest to Cassidy, 55, who had founded 9 to 5, an organization of female office workers, in 1973 and had also written two books on the subject of women in the office.

"I'd always thought of my aunt as an average person," says Cassidy. "But I became deeply impressed by her survival



Wizard Merlin: Actress Joanna Merlin stars as Jessie Sylvester in the one-act play, "Beautiful Hills of Brooklyn" at the Brooklyn Museum on March 5.

strategies, her sense of dignity and what she had to teach me about how to live."

One of her aunt's survival strategies was to join a senior center not far from her Flatbush home. At the senior center she took a course in poetry offered by Dr. Sondra "Sunny" Brandler. An especially affecting poem the class read was Walt Whitman's "Crossing Brooklyn Ferry," and in the play, Cassidy weaves lines from Whitman's poem into passages from her aunt's diary to "enhance and enoble her life and show we're all part of a grand scheme."

Cassidy was able to track down Dr. Brandler, who is now an associate professor at the department of sociology,

anthropology and social work of CUNY College of Staten Island.

"She was amazed to hear she had had such an effect on my aunt," Cassidy recalls. "She remembered my aunt. But she didn't realize she had touched her soul."

As a writer with a strong interest in "women whose voices are generally not heard," Cassidy feels very close to "Beautiful Hills of Brooklyn."

Said Cassidy, "It's a very close-up, honest, unflinching portrait of the joys and sorrows of old age."

'Moon' shot

Laurie Anderson takes lower-tech approach at BAM; Gallery's 'The School for Scandal' earns them an A+

By Paulanne Simmons
for The Brooklyn Papers

Laurie Anderson has been called a visual artist, composer, poet, photographer, filmmaker, electronics wiz, vocalist and instrumentalist. But she's really best described as a metaphysical performer.

For her 2001 solo show, "Happines," Anderson stayed with an Amish family in Pennsylvania, went whitewater rafting with Buddhist monks and worked at a McDonald's in downtown Manhattan, not far from Ground Zero. Her current show, "The End of the Moon," which opened at BAM Harvey Theater on Feb. 22, was inspired by her two-year stint as artist-in-residence at NASA.

Although Anderson never traveled into outer space, she did visit the Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Pasadena, Calif.; the Johnson Space Center in Houston, Texas; the Space Telescope Science Institute in Baltimore, Md.; and the Kennedy Space Center in Cape Canaveral, Fla. Anderson watched training sessions, took notes and asked questions. But "The End of the Moon" has as much to do with America's space program as

"King Kong" has to do with the animal rights movement. For Anderson, all reality is personal. And not all of life is reality.

Her experiences at NASA serve mostly as a launching pad for her own thoughts on life on Earth and beyond. The stage in "The End of the Moon" is set with burning candles, an armchair and a small screen displaying the cratered surface of the moon.

Anderson, wearing a black pantsuit with sequin trim, has a voice that is gentle, compelling and sexy. Her current show, "The End of the Moon," which opened at BAM Harvey Theater on Feb. 22, was inspired by her two-year stint as artist-in-residence at NASA.

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Simple affair: Laurie Anderson drew from her experiences as NASA's artist-in-residence to create her latest work "The End of the Moon," which emphasizes words over elaborate gadgets or set design.

ing quality about "The End of the Moon." Perhaps Anderson's performance has been influenced by the tragedy of the space shuttle Columbia or the tragedy of the war in Iraq, which she clearly opposes. But even Anderson's jokes seem sad.

At one point she tells her audience that life is bad art with too many writers. Later in the evening she remarks that people don't stutter at the end of words because by then it's too late to be afraid.

Of course, she doesn't stutter, and it's hard to believe An-

derson doesn't believe in standing still. And she's happy to take everyone else along for the ride.

Back to School

In the days before chat rooms, the best way to spread malicious gossip was over tea at a friend's house. The British 18th-century playwright Richard Brinsley Sheridan used this human propensity for backbiting to great effect in one of his most popular plays, "The School for Scandal," now at the Gallery Players under the direction of Henry Wishcamper.

As a comedy of manners, "The School for Scandal" returned to the basic style of the Restoration period, but many critics have noted that Sheridan's play has a moral content not present in works of 17th-century England. Names like Lady Sneerwell, Joseph Surface and Sir Benjamin Backbite clearly demonstrate Sheridan's disdain for a certain type of individual.

With his brilliant depiction of the manners of his day, Sheridan created a polished satirical comedy that loses none of its charm as a period piece in contemporary times. The Gallery Players, true to their robust treatment of the classics, present "School for Scandal" with all its stylish trimmings — from Carrie Mossman's simple but elegant set to Sarah Kizur's elaborate costumes, complete with 6-inch-high wigs and wired skirts.

Unlike many directors, Wishcamper has resisted the temptation to tinker with the classics. He has chosen instead to let the play's dramatic structure and accurate humor speak for themselves.

See **SCHOOL** on page 12

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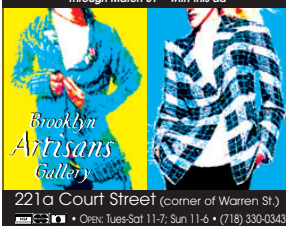
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Beauty

Clinton Hill entrepreneur makes bath and body products in her boutique

By Erin Marie Daly
for The Brooklyn Papers

When a desperate mother brought her eczema-ridden infant into Karen's Body Beautiful, a natural body-care products store in Clinton Hill, owner Karen Tappin Sanderson knew just what to do.

"I tell people that I'm not an herbalist or a doctor," she told GO Brooklyn. "I just read a lot of books." In this case, she customized a soothing lotion from a blend of non-irritating ingredients such as ginger and rosemary to relieve the baby's symptoms.

"I feel good making something for someone specially," said Sanderson. She may only be 29, but Sanderson possesses a Trump-like business savvy — a duo of female friends. Her 520-square-foot store, opened last February, employs her husband and business partner, Damani Sanderson, 46, is both a joint labor of love and the realization of a personal lifelong dream. Growing up in impoverished East Flatbush to Guyanese immigrants, Sanderson, like many first-generation Americans, dreamed of one day being able to support her parents.

"My mother was my inspiration," she said. "I wanted to be able to take care of my family."

While still a junior at the University

BEAUTY

Karen's Body Beautiful is located at 150 Clinton Ave. at Myrtle Avenue in Clinton Hill. Products range from \$4-\$20. Open daily from noon to 8 p.m. For more information, visit the Web site at www.karensbodybeautiful.com or call (718) 997-4808.

of Virginia, Sanderson's entrepreneurial spirit kicked in, and she began packaging and selling care packages, gourmet gift baskets and birthday cakes. After a brief stint in Wall Street research analyst with "long and unhappy hours," she became a high school history and economics teacher as a way to pay the bills until she could start her own business. She had no idea she'd end up loving to teach, nor that she would meet her future husband, who also taught in the history department.

During the summer of 2003, Sanderson and her husband began studying the therapeutic properties of natural oils, butters and essential oils.

"My husband makes everything — mayonaisse, butter, bread — from scratch, so it wasn't difficult to learn how to make lotions and soaps," she said. Consulting books purchased from the local Barnes and Noble, they quickly taught themselves how to formulate their own products from basic recipes.

"There was a learning curve," Sanderson said with a laugh. "We made lots of watery lotion and soaps that didn't solidify in the beginning." But by Christmas of that year, the two had perfected their product line and signed the lease for their store.

Karen's Body Beautiful takes up a double storefront on Clinton Avenue just off of bustling Myrtle Avenue. Lavender curtains drape the windows, and the invigorating scents of eucalyptus and bergamot waft out onto the sidewalk.

"People often mistake us for a spa," said Sanderson, which has inspired her to create a line of spa products, such as masks and muds, due out this spring. Inside the store, a medley of earthy and floral scents comes from large silver pots in the exposed stainless steel kitchen, where Sanderson stands stirring a vat of a bubbling, creamy substance.

"We use ingredients as the base for most of our lotions," she said, pointing to an enormous bottle on the counter. Other ingredients include avocado, shea butter, jojoba oil, calendula, grape seed and apricot, and a variety of herbs like thyme and sage.

Sanderson's basic philosophy is "If you would cook with it, you would use it on your skin." And indeed, her products — such as Fig Tree Herbal Shower Gel, Honey Oatmeal Body Butter and Strawberry Shampoo and Body Splash — sound delicious



Beautiful day: Karen Tappin Sanderson in her Clinton Hill boutique, Karen's Body Beautiful, where she makes and sells her lines of bath and body products.

enough to eat. She wasn't always so careful, but her husband, a devout vegetarian ("I'm trying," said Sanderson sheepishly), influenced her to live a healthier lifestyle.

"We're joining a very small rank of manufacturers who only use natural ingredients," she said.

With its soft lighting and faint music, the store encourages relaxed browsing. Products are beautifully packaged in cute, white, hand-drawn bottles, and are displayed on elegant oak bookcases handcrafted and stained in mahogany and ebony by Sanderson's brother, Steven.

Sanderson's current lines are Karen's Body Beautiful (women's products), KBFB for Men and KBFB Essentials. Aromatherapy. Of all her products, she's most proud of her best-selling Face Moisturizing Lotion made from organic virgin coconut oil. As for Damani, he's a fan of the shea sugar body scrubs he formulated himself. "Men love them," Sanderson confirms.

She can usually be found whipping up lotion on the stove or advising customers on which products to use. She manages the store herself with only part-time assistance from one other employee and occasionally

Damani, who still teaches during the day.

"I do everything from cleaning the toilet to handling the accounting," she says proudly. "But the kitchen is my lab; it's where I spend more time than anywhere else in my day."

It's this personal devotion to taking the best care possible of her customers that makes Karen's Body Beautiful so unique among bath and body boutiques.

"I hate being away from the store," says Sanderson. "I want to meet all the customers who come in, because I like the feedback. It makes all the hard work worth it."

Giamatti robbed!

To the editor:

I enjoyed reading the article "Underdog is here," by Karen Butler (GO Brooklyn, Feb. 19). It is sad indeed that Paul Giamatti was left off the ballot for a Best Actor Oscar for his role in the comedy film "Sideways."

This episode shows us once again that Hollywood and the Oscars Committee can be very partial and political. Just look at the film "Passion of the Christ" which so far has made over \$600 million worldwide, an amount which current Oscar film contenders won't make. [It] wasn't even mentioned as an Oscar contender.

What a joke! Anyway, the point I would like to make about Ms. Butler's article is that she omitted the word "late" when referring to Paul Giamatti's father and former President of Yale and Major League Baseball Commissioner A. Bartlett Giamatti. As you may know, Mr. Giamatti died of cancer several years ago while serving as baseball commissioner.

—Michael Giammarella
Oakland Gardens, NY

Where to

Compiled by Susan Rosenthal

SAT, MARCH 5

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BAMA: Brooklyn Academy of Music presents "The End of the Moon," a solo work by NASA artist-in-residence Laurie Anderson. See review on page 9. \$20 to \$50. 7:30 pm. BAM Theater, 651 Fulton St. (718) 624-1100.

ST. ANNE'S WAREHOUSE: The Worcester Group's "House Lights," from Gertrude Stein's "Doctor Faustus Lights the Lights," \$27. 8 pm. 38 West St. (718) 254-9779.

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PLAY: Our Lady of Guadalupe Youth Theater presents "My Favorite Year." \$11, \$9 seniors and children 10 and younger. 8 pm. 1518 73rd St. (718) 232-6020.

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SUN, MARCH 6

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GALLERY PLAYS: presents "The School for Scandal," a comedy in the English language. See review on page 9. \$15, \$12 children 12 and under and seniors. 8 pm. 199 14th St. (718) 595-0547.

PLAY: Our Lady of Guadalupe Youth Theater presents "My Favorite Year." \$11, \$9 seniors and children 10 and younger. 8 pm. 1518 73rd St. (718) 232-6020.

FIRST WEEKEND: Brooklyn Arts Exchange presents a dance performance piece. Pappanose. \$15, \$10 members, \$8 low-income. 8 pm. 421 Fifth Ave. (718) 835-0018.

BIG THEATER: presents "Big Top Machine," featuring acting, live puppetry and theater. \$10. 8 pm. 575 Metropolitan Ave. (718) 907-3457.

MUSIC: The Omni Ensemble presents a program of works by Franz Zappa, Maria Piazopolka, Ornella Coleman, John Lewis, David Wechsler and others. \$15, \$12 stu-

Where to

Compiled by Susan Rosenthal

SAT, MARCH 5

OUTDOORS AND TOURS
ICE SKATING: at Wolman Rink, \$5 adults, \$3 children and seniors. Skate rental \$5. 10 am to 1 pm and 2 pm to 6 pm. Enter Prospect Park at Parkside and Ocean avenues. (718) 287-5252.

COFFEE BAR: Carries and their owners are invited to an early morning get-together from 7 am to 9 am. Long Meadow near Fitch House, Prospect Park. (888) 604-3422. Free.

URBAN WALK: Brooklyn Center for the Urban Environment takes a tour of the art and culture in Williamsburg. \$11, 9 members, \$8 seniors and students. Noon to 2 pm. Meet at street level of the Marcy Avenue station on Broadway. (718) 788-8500.

BROOKLYN BRIDGE WALK: Big Onion Tours takes a walk across the Brooklyn Bridge and through the city's first subway focusing on history, architecture and people of this area. \$12, \$10 students and seniors. 1 pm. Meet at southeast corner of Broadway and Chambers Street. (212) 439-1200.

OBESITY WALKATHON: Student National Medical Association hosts an event to raise funds for obesity research. Call (212) 524-4666.

PERFORMANCE

CONCERT: Kolot Cheyenu hosts its annual celebration and dance party. Live music, a cocktail and dessert reception and a silent auction. 7 pm to 11 pm. Grand Prospect Hall, 263 Prospect Hall. Call for tickets info. (718) 390-7493.

OPERA: Regina Opera Company presents "Cavalleria Rusticana," \$15, \$10 seniors and \$5 teens. 7 pm. Regina Hall, corner of 60th Street and 12th Avenue. (718) 232-3555.

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Compiled by Susan Rosenthal

SUN, MARCH 6

OUTDOORS AND TOURS
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COFFEE BAR: Carries and their owners are invited to an early morning get-together from 7 am to 9 am. Long Meadow near Fitch House, Prospect Park. (888) 604-3422. Free.

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Where to

Compiled by Susan Rosenthal

Tues, March 8

SUPPORT: Maimonides Medical Center offers a program for care givers. 1:30 pm to 5 pm. 979 48th St. (718) 253-7996. Free.

BOOK DISCUSSION: Brooklyn Public Library, Central branch, presents "The Fire This Time" by Henry Louis Gates Jr. 7 pm. Grand Army Plaza. (718) 250-2100. Free.

MUSIC: Long Island University presents jazz cellist Eli Friedlander. 4 pm. Humanities Building, Delacorte Avenue and Flatbush Avenue. (718) 488-1011. Free.

DEBT: Brooklyn Public Library, Business branch, hosts "Managing Your Debt: Understanding How to Reduce Your Debt and Avoid Debt Pitfalls." 6 pm to 8 pm. 263 Calverton Plaza West. (718) 623-7000. Free.

READING: Writers Jonathan Lethem and Colson Whitehead take part in "Readings on the 4th Floor," a literary series with proceeds benefiting the creation of a new school library at PS 107. \$10, 7:30 pm to 9:30 pm. (718) 367-6414.

RECIPE: "The End of the Moon," a solo work by NASA artist-in-residence Laurie Anderson. See review on page 9. \$20 to \$50. 7:30 pm. BAM Theater, 651 Fulton St. (718) 624-1100.

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Where to

Compiled by Susan Rosenthal

Wed, March 9

LUNCHEON TOUR: Brooklyn Historical Society hosts a tour of its four-story Queen Anne style building. Limit 10 people. \$6, \$4 seniors and students. 12:30 pm. 128 Pierrepont St. (718)

DUMBO recipe swap

In the old days, neighbors wouldn't think twice about borrowing cups of flour from one another in a pinch or sharing casserole recipes. To bring back a taste of that culinary camaraderie, the DUMBO Neighborhood Association (DNA) is launching an effort to collect local recipes.

The group is putting together a "neighborhood cookbook" featuring 150 favorite recipes from local residents and area restaurants. And if the kitchen makes you uncomfortable, fear not. Takeout menus from local restaurants are being included for those who like to make reservations for dinner.

"This kind of cookbook couldn't have been done by anyone else," Maria Farina, DNA's treasurer, told GO Brooklyn. "It's a community effort, and everyone wants to be involved." All proceeds from the cookbook will support DNA's community improvement efforts.

According to Farina, the cookbook will be available for purchase at area retailers for \$20 a volume, when a potluck lunch party will be held at BSH Home Appliance Corporation's Showroom at 1 Main St. at Water Street.

Farina, who said she's "not a cook," explained that the cookbook will cater to both chefs and amateur alike.

"It will be organized by type of meal and will include sections on 'great meals for kids' and 'under 15-minute preparation time,'" she said. It will also have an index of names for those who submitted recipes; that way, said Farina, "if you know somebody who's a great cook, you can look up his or her recipes by name."

To submit a recipe of your own by March 14, visit DNA's Web site at www.dumbo-dna.org or call president Nancy Webster at (917) 439-1585 for more information. — Erin Marie Daly

Where to Go...

Continued from page 10...

THEATER: "A Lovely Sunday for Creve Coeur," 5 pm. See Sat., March 12.

IMPACT THEATER: "Macbeth," 8 pm. See Sat., March 12.

BRICK THEATER: "Big Top Machine," 5 pm. See Sat., March 12.

SAT., MARCH 12

OUTDOORS AND TOURS

BLOOMING BROOKLYN: Brooklyn Botanic Garden hosts 24th annual Horticulture Extravaganza, featuring displays, workshops and speakers. 10 am to 4 pm. 1000 Washington Ave. (718) 623-7220. Free.

TAKE A WALK: Guided urban walks take a tour through Jamaica Bay, Sheepshead Bay and Flatbush. 10 am. Meet at Sheepshead Bay Road station. Q train, street level. (212) 228-3102. Free.

ICE SKATING: The Wollman rink is open. 55 adults, \$3 and seniors. Skate rental \$5. 10 am to 1 pm and 2 pm to 6 pm. Enter Prospect Park at Parkside and Ocean avenues. (718) 287-5262.

WALKING TOUR: Brooklyn Center for the Urban Environment takes a tour of Coney Island. Learn about this landmark neighborhood and its history, development and revitalization. 11 am. 59 members, \$8 students and seniors. 11 am to 1 pm. Meet at southwest corner of Atlantic Avenue and Court Street. (718) 788-6500.

PERFORMANCE

THEATER: The Brooklyn College Theater Department, New Workshop Theater, presents "A Lovely Sunday for Creve Coeur," by Tennessee Williams. 5:20 pm and 8 pm. Gershwin Theater, Brooklyn College, one block from the intersection of Flatbush and Nostrand avenues. (718) 951-4400.

CONCERT: Plymouth Church hosts a benefit concert. 8:15, 7 pm, 7:30. 75 Hicks St. (718) 624-4433.

OPERA: Regina Opera Company performs "Cavalleria Rustica" and "La Traviata." 8 pm. Regina Hall, corner of 65th Street and 12th Avenue. (718) 226-3555.

ST. ANN'S WAREHOUSE: The Wooster Group's "House of Lights," from Gertrude Stein's "Doctor Faustus Lights the Lights." 8:30, 8 pm. 38 Water St. (718) 254-8779.

BROOKLYN ARTS EXCHANGE: presents an All Women's Performance Festival with Danielle Abrams, Melissa Briggs and Lisa Haas in "Balloons." 8:15, 10 pm. 55 students and seniors. 421 Fifth Ave. (718) 832-0018.

MUSIC: Brooklyn Conservatory of Music presents jazz pianist and flutist Lucy Gallher and her trio. 8:15, 10 pm. 55 students and seniors. 330 Seventh Ave. (718) 622-3300.

BRICK THEATER: presents "Big Top Machine," featuring actors, flexed puppets and puppets. 8:15, 10 pm. 575 Metropolitan Ave. (718) 907-3457.

PLAY: Our Lady of Guadalupe Youth Theater presents "My Favorite Year." 8:15, 10 pm. 59 seniors and children 10 and younger. 8 pm. 1518 12th St. (718) 228-4920.

IMPACT THEATER: presents Shakespeare's "Macbeth." 8:15, 8 pm. 190 Underhill Ave. (718) 390-7163.

CHILDREN

KIDS FILM FEST: in association with the Chicago International Children's Film Festival, Brooklyn Academy of Music presents over 50 short and feature-length children's films from 20 countries. 57 per screening for children 13 and younger. \$10 per screening for adults. \$6 for BAM Cinema Club members. For schedule of films, visit www.bam.org or call (718) 634-4103.

PHOTO OP: Commerce Bank marks the Easter holiday with a visit from the Easter bunny. 10 am to 1 pm. Commerce Bank locations in Brooklyn Heights, Casarsa's Bay, Sheepshead Bay and Prospect Park. (855) 470-

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3 Brooklyn PAPERS PARENT

Laying down rules for Internet usage

Q: My teenage son is supposedly studying in his bedroom, but I hear instant messages popping up all night on his computer. I want to limit the instant messaging, but I don't want to single him out.

A: For millions of multitasking teenagers, instant messaging, or I-Ming (pronounced "eye emming"), is second nature.

"It's the teenage water cooler," says Carol Weston, author of "For Teens Only" (HarperCollins, 2002). "Nowadays some teenagers type more than they talk, and that's not all bad. Phones no longer ring off the hook at houses with teenagers in them."

Instant messaging lets users see line-by-line text immediately. Cell phones are a more obvious distraction, Price says, but instant messaging is one of the newest problems facing families with teens and teens.

"They can spend hours talking nonsense," says Robert Price, technology coordinator for a public school system. "Instant messaging is like hanging out. But it can become an addiction."

The solution: Fight technology with technology. First, get your own account and explore how instant messaging works. Price suggests, then learn how to restrict when and for how long your child chats — say from 8 to 9 p.m. after homework is finished.

Kids have to learn to manage the distraction of "the party line," she says, and to some-

Parent-to-Parent

times shut down the computer. "But if they get their homework done, a little I-Ming can serve as a wonderful break. And it's efficient. It's less intrusive to ask what questions are on a test rather than phone a friend."

About 17 million teenagers use instant messaging each day, according to the Pew Internet and American Life Project. For them, I-Ming is edging past e-mail as their favorite Internet communication tool. But parents rank it as the "No. 1 distraction for youngsters."

Mom and Dad "can't put that genie back in the bottle," Price says, but they need to respond to the changes in technology by setting limits with their kids, talking to them about time management, and adding web blockers for inappropriate sites.

Kim Mohr, a mother of three sons, agrees: "Being a parent

means being able to say, 'I moved you enough to say no.'"

"We have a program that blocks Internet connections after a certain time of night, and it doesn't come on until a certain time after school to encourage homework."

In the long run, Price and Mohr say, most kids feel more loved and secure when they see their parents setting boundaries.

Develop some "parental backbone" and move the computer out of your child's bedroom and into the family room, suggests reader Shireen Dreyer. And think back to your own limits as a youngster: "My parents limited my time to 30 minutes a day, no more than 10 minutes to a single caller, and I survived just fine," Dreyer says.

Some parents use America Online's timer to restrict the amount of time allowed for daily Internet use to about an hour, and to set up a list of approved screen names for IM chatting.

Other tips: • Be aware of opportunities for misuse. A person can IM using several different identities.

• Don't share passwords. Shared passwords can cause a lot of damage if someone messages people and pretends to be your child.

• Help your child set up "privacy preferences" on his computer to limit who can contact him.

• Negotiate limits with your child, or your Internet-savvy teen will thwart your efforts. One father set filters to block messages between certain hours of the day so his teenager would go to bed at a reasonable hour. But the boy figured out a way to get around the filters.

Joshua Finer, president of Software-Parents.com, recommends these Internet safety tips:

• Remind your child never to reveal his name, address, phone number or other personal information to anyone online.

• Communicate regularly with your child about who he or she talks to online.

• Don't reveal age, gender or hobbies; and do not create suggestive screen names or IM names.

Tip of the week

Take steps to ensure the safety of your children as they use the Internet.

I.M. Control! (Quality Time Solutions), provides parents the ability to set instant messaging limits on the time of day and the total amount of time a child may be online. I.M. Control! does not monitor content. For more information, visit www.imcontrol.net or call (908) 654-0400.

Software-Parents.com sells eblast, monitoring software that can e-mail parents reports of all their child's Internet activity, or e-mail chat logs only when certain flagged words show up. The company also

sells Net Nanny 5.1, which has a time-limit feature that will let you schedule access to instant messages by day and time of day. For more information, go to www.software-parents.com.

If you have tips or a question, call our toll-free hotline any time at (800) 827-1092 or e-mail us at p2ptips@att.net.

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Bridge Park Rec Center is kept

Jess Wisloski
The Brooklyn Papers

Disarmed that new plans for Brooklyn Bridge Park omit a Chelsea Piers-like recreational facility but add luxury housing, community members have complained the park lacks enough active amenities for its neighbors.

Franklin Stone, a Cobble Hill resident and to many, the godmother of recreational uses in the park, said this week she had yet to see any efforts from the park planners to bring any of the recreational facilities suggested in earlier park planning workshops. In light of a recent story in the New York Times about a Chelsea Piers bid to rent Pier 57 on Manhattan's West Side, some have wondered why not move them to the Brooklyn Heights piers?

"We do not have recreation for our children and ourselves upland," Stone pointed out to lead park designer Michael Van Valkenburgh at a Jan. 18 meeting held in his offices to address plans for Pier 6 at the foot of Atlantic Avenue.

"To me, [using Pier 6] was the perfect plan, to get off the BQE and drop off your kids," Stone said. "My

Park advocates mourn loss of Chelsea Piers-like sports center

global complaint is still that the entire area surrounding the park are not getting anything in exchange. The near total absence of a year-round recreational facility is a major stumbling block for me."

The planners have repeatedly cited the expense of building an indoor, year-round recreational facility as the reason it was dropped from the latest designs.

Marianna Koval, co-executive director of the Brooklyn Bridge Park Conservancy, mentioned at the same meeting that it might be too soon to expect everything the community wanted.

"I'd really like to have an indoor recreational center, too," said Koval, "but we do have more opportunities in the future. Right now we're getting this whole park," she said, gesturing to a model of the 1.3-mile long expanse along the waterfront.

Van Valkenburgh instead plans a clear, modern-plastic, ventilated indoor soccer facility that would be open year-round at Pier 6.

But, complained Stone, a Cobble Hill parent, soccer alone doesn't serve the needs of the greater community.

"Their solution to all their ability is the clear plastic shed they're going to put on one of the piers?" said Stone. "I'm still waiting to be convinced."

Joanne Nicholas, another Cobble Hill parent, who became involved with the park plan 18 years ago (her daughter is now 25), said she, too, was concerned about recreation.

"What we basically wanted was, you know the ball fields along the East River on the other side. We didn't know why we couldn't have them. We needed recreation for our teens, for our kids, there were adult leagues that would go over to Manhattan to play. You didn't have to

work hard to find out there was a need for recreational space in Downtown Brooklyn and Brooklyn Heights," Nicholas said.

"I know there has not been a full analysis," said Stone, of less-cult suggestions for recreation. "We have built a park for summer use, but not year-round."

Van Valkenburgh vowed to Stone, "I will assure you we will carefully look at the cost of a recreational building."

Wendy Leventer, director of the Brooklyn Bridge Park Development Corporation, a subsidiary of the Empire State Development Corp. that is charged with planning and building the park, said at subsequent meetings that the cost to build a recreational center is "just not feasible" for the park to bear in its budget.

Asked why the existing pier sheds could not be used, Matthew Urbanaki,

an associate of Van Valkenburgh's pointed out, "You don't really need to talk to Chelsea Piers to know why you can't play soccer in here. This building is not remotely like Chelsea Piers. It is not structurally sound," he said of the shipping storage shed on Pier 6.

Leventer said that to build an arena for a recreational center on the pier would cost \$50 million, at least "for one with an indoor track," like the Chelsea Piers has.

"Chelsea [Piers] pays \$1.5 million for their land from the city. That's all. We need more than that," she added. "We need 15 million dollars every year."

A pool alone was well over a million," added Signey Nielsen, who did the cost analysis of the park.

Van Valkenburgh concurred. "Something that generates a couple hundred thousand a year is fine — they'd probably pay us \$500,000 or \$600,000 to do it. But you can't ask the park to pay for it," he said.

"Income generation is small on the recreational center, and development costs are large," said Van Valkenburgh, explaining why it was scrapped.

At a press breakfast prior to a Feb. 22 public meeting revealing the park plans, spokesmen for the park refused

to answer questions regarding how much revenue a sports complex could generate.

A meeting just about revenue generation held March 2 held by the BBPDC did not address the topic.

"People don't want a private, expensive Chelsea Piers-style gym" said spokesman Lee Silberstein at the press breakfast, and he cited community discussions as evidence.

"Trust us, it wouldn't work," added Tom Montvel-Cohen, a community consultant hired by the park.

Wendy Leventer had previously said of their efforts, "We talked to the Chelsea Piers about development there [but] they weren't interested."

But Kenn Lowy, a Brooklyn Heights resident, he thought Chelsea Piers just hadn't been asked.

Erica Bates-Schietinger, vice president of Corporate Communications for the Chelsea Piers, told The Brooklyn Papers, "We shared our experiences with them."

"We get calls from all over the globe of people who say they want to just 'pick the brains' of our owners. Probably somebody who knew someone knew some of the owners."

But asked whether the BBPDC had

asked Chelsea Piers about operating in the park site, she said "We had no official involvement in any way."

A spokesman for the ESDC, Chapin Fay, cited a May 19, 2004 meeting between BBPDC and Chelsea Piers officials.

"We did not ask them if they had any interest in doing something in the park, nor did we ever say that we did," Fay wrote in an e-mail.

"We showed them the existing plans of the pier sheds and they told us that the column spacing would not work for Chelsea Piers-type activities, which we have already stated publicly."

But Stone doubts the planners even explored ideas for higher-revenue facilities in the space.

"What about an ice skating rink? What about indoor gymnastics? What about bowling? What about an outdoor skate park? What about outdoor basketball, or tennis platforms?" she asked.

"This is what people at those meetings said they wanted," Stone said, referring to the 2000 public planning sessions. "Nobody at that meeting said, 'Oh, what I really want is a good floating rink so I could look underneath the piers.'"

COMMERCE...

Continued from page 1

Naparetek characterized the coalition as a group of younger parents "living in the Slope between Fourth and Sixth Avenue" that wanted to become active in the community but who were not satisfied with the inactivity of the local civic council or community board committees.

After sending an 1,100-signature petition against the bank's design to Commerce Bank CEO Vernon Hill, the group attracted the attention of the press, local elected officials and the Park Slope Civic Council, which voted in favor of the petition's requests to eliminate the 29-foot-wide drive-through and curb cutaway, the glowing red sign, and to request developing a more architecturally appropriate building for the corner lot.

While they caught many elected officials off-guard, the Park Slope Neighbors ultimately accomplished their goals.

Paul Heller, a First Street resident who spearheaded last year's conversions against the bank, thanked the group for their involvement, but said the six-spot parking lot would still mean traffic on his street, though not even comparable to how much would've been back with the three-lane drive-through.

"I wouldn't characterize it as 'not a drive-through,'" he said. "By and large the people on First Street didn't want to see an entrance on First Street, but the architecture was so improved, and we're hoping they will be parking spaces mostly for employees."

"Park Slope Neighbors made all the difference in the world," he added.

Heller said his First Street traffic redirection "because, to a certain extent we did get the bank to agree to have everything go in and out on Fifth Avenue, and we felt that all we

could get. Politicians weren't running in to help us, civic associations weren't coming to help us, Community Board 6 wasn't coming — nobody," he said.

"Aaron Naparetek just was astounding," said Heller. He's an incredible activist. I also have to give credit to Jack Rainey, the vice president [of governmental and community affairs] for Commerce Bank. He might have been exasperated, but he never said an unequivocal 'No' — he always went back to try and get something better for us, even though they had a right to build."

While the new branch was originally expected to be completed by July, David Flaherty, Commerce Bank's vice president of communications said the concessions have delayed completion to December.

But he added that good will made up for it.

"I think a lot of helpful and candid discussions and a lot of very good input was presented by the Park Slope Neighbors group," said Flaherty. "Commerce Bank is interested in



The new plan for Commerce Bank to be built at Fifth Avenue and First Street in Park Slope.

being in communities for long periods of time, he added. "We enter with the idea of being a long-time community partner and resident. And we thought it was important to enter with the thoughts of as many people as possible."

"We came to what we think of as a great and workable agreement," Flaherty said, that would maintain "brand awareness" without a big glowing sign in a normal street-level building.

"For Commerce Bank this is still the most toned-down building they said they've ever built," said Naparetek. "That's what they told me."

Brooklyn Borough President Marty Markowitz said he was "delighted with the process that led to Commerce Bank's new plan for its Park Slope branch," saying it "illustrates how community input can help lead to development that is appropriate to a neighborhood."

Naparetek nearly echoed the sentiment.

"We think this is a big win for the neighborhood, and a great example of how community input can lead to really good development," he said.

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HISTORIC COURT STREET...

Continued from page 1
some thing," Herrera said. That's why we're getting 186 Rensselaer off it's demolished," said Herrera of a building he described as a wedding-cake style commercial building that became residential and is now vacant and for sale.

"It's going to be bought, and it's going to be demolished," he said.

Among the other buildings the BHA finds architecturally significant are 177, 181 and 185 Montague St., and 16, 32 and 44 Court St.

Although no application for the skyscraper district has yet been submitted, Diane Jackier, a spokeswoman for the Landmarks Preservation Commission, said the process requires full community involvement.

"The commission will look at it and review it, and if it's something we're interested in going forward with, [the commission] reaches out to all the owners to contact each one," said Jackier.

Meanwhile, Meredith Hamilton, another BHA member, has also been working to make up for lost time — decades of it — in the greater Downtown Brooklyn area, fighting to save other buildings of architectural value from demolition in the city's third largest business district.

After a unanimous vote in December by the Community Board 2 landmarks committee to landmark 505 Fulton St., a Romanesque Revival building built in 1890 by Henry Oysterman as a warehouse and department store, and 450-474 Fulton St., a 1924 neo-Classical limestone building at the corner of Hoyt Street, Hamilton awaits the ruling of the Landmarks Preservation Commission on the historic value of the two buildings near the Fulton Mall. The full board approved the landmarking in January.

Though public testimony was presented in November, Jackier said they held the record open in order for the

community board to review them.

Which is better than the potential alternative: demolition.

With the passage of the Downtown Brooklyn Plan last July, many landowners whose buildings fall within the 60-block area could stand to profit by selling or demolishing their property to redevelop rather than go to the expensive lengths a landmark would require.

Hamilton agrees that the idea of an extended landmark district for the commercial area is a valuable one.

"Certainly the buildings at the edge of the district are just as important as the buildings at the center of it," she said.

"They're very much of the same flavor; it's of a certain era and it's quite wonderful."

And Jackier said the LPC has been saw many applications for new landmark boundaries.

"I can't speak to a trend, but I do know that some existing historic districts have asked to expand their boundaries and I would certainly credit it to the success of landmarking and how it has increased the value of homes and increased the stability of neighborhoods," she said.

In Hamilton's mind, landmark status is a win-win.

"I think the landmarks are sitting on these gorgeous, beautiful buildings, and it's really a goldmine," she said.

"What you worry about is that somebody comes along and knocks down a building before it's landmarked or compromises it for an extension, and it cannot be fixed."

Some of her preservationist counterparts, like Cathy Wasylenko, would agree. Known as a stalwart about landmark issues among CB2 members, she thinks the whole rezoning plan was the wrong idea.

There should be across-the-board landmarking of the city," Wasylenko told The Brooklyn Papers. "They never should have voted to rezone and de-

map in the first place; it's like putting the cart before the horse, really."

But Tony Belli, who chairs the CB2 landmarks committee, said the downtown rezoning isn't the problem.

"Most everybody is for landmarking, but [the presenters] didn't contact the owners of the buildings," said Belli, who said Michael Weiss, executive director of the Metrotech Business Improvement District, showed up at the committee meeting and testified against landmarking on behalf of owners who feared being tagged with expensive renovations for their incidental historic importance.

"Nobody's really against it," he said, "but we can't take things at face value. Are we going to be putting them in the advantage?"

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Arena foes stuck in Olympic spin cycle

By Jess Wisloski
The Brooklyn Papers

As members of the International Olympic Committee toured the five boroughs last Tuesday, organizers from Develop-Don't Destroy Brooklyn split into factions over whether to step inside the Olympic rings or worry about what's happening on their home court.

The group of Prospect Heights-area residents, which formed last year in opposition to Bruce Ratner's plans to build a 19,000-seat arena at the intersection of Flatbush and Atlantic avenues, divided their stance on how to handle the IOC last week.

While some representatives landed seats at a breakfast table at the Plaza Hotel Tuesday morning before the IOC's tour of the city's proposed Olympic venues, others hung mammoth banners from buildings flanking the now barren Atlantic Avenue rail yards where the arena is anticipated for development.

The latter faction, led by Patti Hagan and the Prospect Heights Action Coalition, criticized from afar those who had entered the "lion's den."

"It wasn't a meeting directly with the IOC," complained Hagan, whose PHAC named down going to the meeting when they found out it would be "intermediated" by the city's Olympic bid committee, NYC 2012.

"I warned Dan Goldstein [of DDBB] that Jay Krieger [executive director of NYC 2012] would spin him in a direction he would probably regret," she said.



An anti-Olympics sign hangs on a Dean Street brownstone between Flatbush and Sixth avenues on Wednesday, the day before the International Olympic Committee was set to visit.

But members of DDBB, who along with PHAC pushed for the meeting for weeks, went ahead anyway, sharing the table with a pro-Olympics Queens group.

When a representative from another community group, the Clinton Special District, which opposes the West Side stadium plans in Manhattan, dropped out of the meeting, saying he didn't want to appear with groups supporting the bid, DDBB was suddenly positioned as a group that supports the bid.

Indeed, in a press conference following the meeting, Krieger said he had met with groups that supported the city's Olympic bid.

"The groups expressed their views, and both groups also expressed their votes for the Games," Krieger later that morning.

Multiple calls to Krieger's press offices and the NYC 2012 press hotline went unreturned.

"It's just ridiculous what he said," said a DDBB representa-

tive who was present at the meeting but did not want his name published. "We spent the entire time discussing all the problems with constructing a brand-new arena — and how countries in India or in South America would never be able to afford to host the Olympics if it becomes this expensive."

The representative said the four members of the 13-member IOC listened with careful attention and seemed "particularly concerned" when she characterized the use of the bid as "an ex-

cuse for a land grab" and that community groups, at least in Brooklyn, "was being co-opted."

The commissioners took notes, he said, but did not ask questions.

But following the meeting, Krieger held a press conference that, according to the activists, miscounted their presence at the table as unflattering support.

DDBB spokesman Daniel Goldstein said it was a bald-faced lie.

"He's misleading and lying, as is done throughout the city," Goldstein said. "We don't have a position on the Olympics; we're agnostic — on the Olympics, and we're against the bid. We'd like to ask Jay Krieger and their 2012 Committee if they're even in favor of the Olympics, because the bid they have outlined and put forth the IOC is sure to lose."

"We're thankful to the commission for giving us 15 minutes in their four-day tour of the city and the commissioners seemed to squirm in their seats when we told them about the Ratner arena, particularly when we told them their Olympics were being used for real estate deals," Goldstein said.

While Forest City Ratner spokesman Barry Baum said he did not know whether a tour would be given of the Atlantic Yards site where the 19,000-seat arena is proposed, the members of PHAC made their voice known anyway.

"It was hard to get anything across to them," said Hagan. "So we figured the thing we could do is put up these banners

as big as we could."

But the Olympics never came. "My understanding is that they send scouts," she said. "I imagine some scouts came out and surveyed the territory. I don't know how naive I am, but I supposed they would come out here on Thursday morning and at least walk up Pacific Street to take a look. And we were waiting there for them

with information about eminent domain — and people being forced out of their homes while public subsidies are going to support this arena."

At least some people saw the massive banners from the rooftops of buildings, which stayed up until Thursday and at least walk up Pacific Street to take a look. And we were waiting there for them

One featured a giant, smiling

horse of special importance to any appreciator of Greek history. "Trojan Horse," read the caption below it.

The IOC's final day in the city was Thursday, and New York marked their third visit after having been to Madrid and London. Next evaluations will look at Paris and Moscow. The IOC will choose which city will host the 2012 Olympics on July 6.



Sacred grounds

Donna Coutau-Gross of the Sac and Fox Nation walks around the grave site of Do-Hum-Me (1824-1843), an American Indian princess, at Green-Wood Cemetery on Saturday, Feb. 26. Earlier, New Yorkers gathered to save the historic monument at a fundraiser held in the Green-Wood Cemetery chapel. Do-Hum-Me was the daughter of a chief of the Sac tribe who came east in early 1843. She and her husband, Cow-Hick-Kee, were hired by P.T. Barnum to perform wedding and war dances at the American Museum on Broadway.

Global warming will sink Brooklyn Bridge Park

To the editor:

All this discussion of the funding of the proposed Brooklyn Bridge Park leaves out one important factor: global warming. The fact is that current estimates of the overall rise of the world's oceans are for a 2- to 3-foot increase by the end of this century. If the current estimates of this rise are wrong, the height could be more — perhaps much more.

This project is set at sea level, and takes into account tidal forces. However, apparently it does not take global warming into account. I suspect that by the end of the century, at the best, this project will be under water at high tide. At the worst, the Brooklyn Bridge Park will be the least of our worries. Think how many other major cities are at or near sea level — Venice, New Orleans, Boston, London, even Washington, D.C. (the Tidal Basin isn't called that for nothing). To say nothing of larger lands, including the Netherlands, the north German Plain, England's The Broads.

[Brooklyn Heights Association executive director] Judy Stanton knows about my concerns, but apparently discounts them. I can

LETTERS

only note that one factor in the citing of the City of New York's new Office of Emergency Management, at the old Red Cross building, was because it is above the flood plane in which all of the park, and DUMBO itself, is located.

High tides, storm surges and hurricanes have apparently not been factored into this project, either.

— Andrew I. Porter, Brooklyn Heights

Park Slope teacher needs a few lessons

To the editor:

Your article headlined "Slope kids bash American soldier" [The Brooklyn Papers, Feb. 26] is engaging. I am a Vietnam-era vet. We went through all of this over 30 years ago, why do we have to do it all over again? This excuse for a teacher Alex Kan-

hardt needs more than a letter of reprimand, he needs to be as aggressive in his apologetics as he was in attacking the poor youngster during service to his country.

I am considered, by most people, to be a liberal, to a fault. This man is no liberal; he is a self-hate monger. Teach that your country is always wrong, no matter what, without discussion or any intelligent thought? Teach our children that wars are caused by soldiers? How ridiculous!

This teacher must be held high as a bad example of what teaching is!

— Aaron Nesoff, Park Slope

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